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EDITED BY

Paul Crane SJ

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Catholics and the Permissive Society

THE EDITOR

SOME weeks ago in an article in the *Catholic Herald* Mr. Christopher Hollis referred to the Christian as "accepting for himself the discipline of indissoluble marriage". Does he imply, thereby, that the indissolubility of marriage is enjoined only by Christian teaching and not also by God's law for all men, which we call the moral law? If he does, then it is possible to speak loosely of a "right" to divorce. If he does not, then it is difficult to see how any such right can be supposed to exist. If the indissolubility of marriage is enjoined on all men by God's law, how can any man possess the right to break it by divorce? One can ask this question and recognise, whilst doing so, that those who claim such a right in ignorance may well be without blame.

If the moral law exists for man's good and if this is the ultimate purpose of government, it would seem that government, in its legislative capacity, is bound to take count of the moral law of God. In other words, if political power over men is held under God, his wishes for men must be respected in its exercise. To disregard them is to invite tyranny on the one hand or anarchy on the other. One can say this whilst recognising that a government,

ignorant of the moral law, is not necessarily to be blamed if, through permissive legislation, it helps open the road to moral and social anarchy. But the question here is not one of blame, but of fact. One can absolve government from blame for the harm it does through permissive legislation, whilst deploring the fact of the harm. What no Christian should do, so far as I can see, is define, as proper to the legislative function of government, the granting of legal sanction to moral practices already permitted by a decadent society. Government must take account of public opinion when it legislates: in this sense, to quote Mr. Hollis, "the legislator must deal with society as it is". What it must not do is enthrone public opinion as its ultimate criterion of right and wrong: in this sense, the legislator must not deal with society as it is.

I am not clear which sense Mr. Hollis intended in his article. I am clear that many Catholics in this country are confused over this issue. Some incline to the view that, in the permissive society of contemporary Britain, laws made by government should reflect rather than mould public opinion. From the unwisdom and, indeed, impossibility very often of legislating effectively in a post-Christian society in favour of sound moral practice, they conclude illogically and illicitly to the wisdom of legislating in favour of immoral practice. If society is permissive, they deem it only appropriate that government should be permissive as well.

This would appear to be the view of a good many Catholics at present. It leads them to brand as "ghetto-minded" and, indeed, "subversive" any attempt made by their brethren to combine effectively against legislation that favours the decadent morals of a permissive society. There can be no doubt, I think, but that the fear, uncertainty and confusion produced by this kind of propaganda has weakened very greatly the opposition that would have been offered once upon a time by English Catholics to recent bills in favour of easier homosexual practices, abortion and, now, divorce. The once vocal Catholic organizations of this country appear to have lost their nerve. They are terrified of being scored as "triumphalist" if they stand in opposition to untruth.

It will be interesting to see what reaction is produced amongst Catholics when the first Bill in favour of euthanasia is introduced to the Commons, as I feel will soon be the case. I wonder if, then, we will turn and fight. Or will we find refuge for inaction in the view of Mr. Hollis that, "It is no use enforcing exclusively Christian rules by law on people who do not accept Christianity". Not that Christians alone are forbidden the practice of euthanasia: the law against killing the old binds all men. I am sure, nevertheless, that Catholics will be found to insist, in this case as in those of abortion and divorce, that, in a permissive society, it ought to be allowed: "the legislator must deal with society as it is".

A final thought. As Catholics in this country withdraw their opposition to the permissive society, they pour out fresh energy in aid of the poor and the hungry in developing lands. Is the one an exchange for the other, an escape route abroad, subconsciously taken perhaps, from pressing obligation at home. It need not be, but is it? You are "with it" if you feed the hungry overseas; a "square" if you stand for truth at home. In our giving abroad are we prompted too little by charity and too much by a desire to conform? If I have hurt or misjudged anyone by this last paragraph, I ask their forgiveness. The thought came very strongly to me. It would not go. I thought readers should have it.

Our philanthropic agencies have drawn a veil over the face of evil. Reality is hidden from us and so we go on trying to pin down certain aspects of it with more and more slogans, most of them as noisy as a drum, and as empty.

The X Age

H. W. J. EDWARDS

HARDLY a day passes now without my hearing someone tell me that I am living in the jet-age, or the atomic-age, — the x age provided it is not the Middle Ages or the Victorian Age. As to the last, I sometimes feel that the so-called Victorian Age has not altogether passed if I may judge from a certain Tennysonian (see *In Memoriam*) wistful agnosticism.

Am I altogether ingenuous in being somewhat critical of this extraordinary self-consciousness about "the age"? I think not. My Silurian ancestors were, I am sure, not given to reminding each other that they were living (circa 200 A.D.) in the Central Heating Age or of the Straight Road Age. The white-robed brethren of my country's fifteen Cistercian houses did not by means of suitable signs convey to each other that in Glyn y Groes, Tintern and Ystrad Fflur they had contrived to show what the Gothic Age might do to bequeath deathless beauty to later generations.

No doubt there are many of my own profession who are chiefly guilty of popularising the stuff about "the age". We journalists almost necessarily depend upon such a cliché as "this day and age", for the journalist's living and duty have all to do with day to day. But the journalist is not altogether to blame; and it was a Protestant theologian held in high repute and rightly so — for his fortitude in face of a monstrous tyranny who coined the phrase, "man has come of age".

But once again I am reminded of the Victorians. There was Mr. Roebuck who declared that he had looked around him to find England safe, prosperous and in the van of everything that was progressive. He piously prayed that this wonder that he thought he saw would continue. No doubt Mr. Roebuck thought that, if man had not come of age, the English had. The latest cry that amounts to a protest, "but, after all, we are living in the twentieth century", is the same cry as that of the optimistic Victorian.

Dangerous Roads

In an idle moment I recently watched the first of a series of TV talks called *The Railway Age*. I watched with a certain detachment until the speaker, a most entertaining fellow, told us that 200 years ago the roads of this realm were very dangerous. By a fluke he told us so an hour or so after the Minister of Transport had impressed on us the great peril of travelling today.

The annual toll of dead and injured upon our modern roads increases steadily, or, if you like, progressively. It is surely more dangerous to travel by road today than in 1767. In the Middle Ages, which journalists commonly confuse with the Dark Ages or, oddly enough, with the Renaissance, during which torture and cruelty grew the more horrible as man the more discovered his powers, church towers lit lanterns to guide the traveller, who was harboured by the monks and prayed for by the church along with the woman whose hour had come. How often in the 14th century did the people of Christendom hear of scores of travellers being without warning blown to bits or burnt alive?

But I am no romantic medievalist. I believe that the safest of times for travelling upon the roads in these isles was about 1900. Most roads were reasonably well surfaced and adequately appointed. Motor traffic was scanty and slow. As late as the twenties road travel was fairly safe, as I know so well from my cycling journeys about Wales, Wessex and the English Midlands at that time. Were I a stripling again, I would not risk cycling now. And I never thought I would live to hear it declared that men and women who walk about

would be protected from death and injury by having to obey new laws governing their movements.

It may be said that I am reactionary, another of the pet words of our time. I write just after having put down Sorel's *Reflections on Violence*, a great work which I read in my youth during the years when syndicalism still influenced my part of Wales. If to be an admirer of Sorel and, now I come to think of it, Kropotkin, is to be a reactionary, commend both authors to the Primrose League.* No matter: it simply will not do for members of "the party of movement" to call out names to anyone who doubts the underlying philosophy of rectilinear necessary progress.

Age of the Common Man

Here my concern is with the popular notion that this is the Age of the Common Man, a cliché which goes with that other, Man Has Come of Age. I am going to consider it because I find, not altogether to my surprise if to my distress, that a very large number of my fellow Catholics seem on the whole to concur with the ideas which the clichés tend to express.

A cliché is normally emotive. There is great emotiveness about such a cliché as The Age of the Common Man. In it are two parts, "the age" and "the common man". As soon as we hear "this is the age of . . .", we usually feel that we have become mentally hamstrung. We say to ourselves that, even if we abhor the thing that is said to describe "the age", we must bear with it, because it is in "the age". Perhaps there is something of the Emperor's New Clothes about "the age of . . .". At least, the man who likes his fellows to believe he is reasonably intelligent and up-to-date and well-news-read has already lost the battle. A slick journalist and his crew may whistle up a new fad and the sluggish mass will try so hard to catch up that it will behave as the loyal crowd behaved as the the naked monarch in Hans Anderson's story came by.

* In passing I notice Sorel's brilliant attack upon liberalism among Protestants and Catholics.

More serious is the emotive power of the expression "the common man". It evokes several images which on the whole are fairly pleasant, for, if we sneer at the romantic medievalist, we would not dream of sneering at the romantic modernist who has tried to take a corner in an admiration for "the common man". (It is odd, by the way, that, if we think well enough of "the common man", we think very differently about the common woman.)

No doubt, when Langland was on Malvern Hill, his contemporaries had a conception of "the common man" because they knew about the commune. But the "common man" of Langland's understanding has almost disappeared from England, though not yet from Wales. I have good reason for giving this "common man" his due since he survived until this century in my own family. This common man had the vote as a lessor member of the agrarian constituency long before Gladstone gave the vote to farm labourers. That free-man of the March rode horseback, poached land that had been enclosed by the local Whig landowner and rather naturally voted Tory — a special sort of Tory-radical intent on preserving liberties rather than liberty, i.e. a certain right of way. The class to which this common man belonged has disappeared in England though he survives in my land, especially in the 'gwerin' class of small farmers officially threatened with extinction because it is "inefficient". It was a class which bred men; but notice that it was a class. Put it another way; it formed part of an estate. If it still exerts an influence in my country, especially where the national language is spoken, it may be said to have a special claim to be regarded as common, expressive, that is, of the commonalty of the nation.

But we do not mean that class when we speak of "the common man". We mean "any man". And by "any man" we mean a mere human being, — someone who has virtually become displaced (however wealthy) and semi-anonymous. Someone has provided us with the expression "faceless people". They are "the common men". The common men who must be conserved in common-ness are like that great Cymro, Bob Owen of Croesor, who though

a peasant or because a peasant, was what we still call a great character. It showed, did his "character" in his very expression. I notice among some of the young men and women of my land intent on some near-militant action to conserve land and language (which they see as practically inseparable) the same faceful-ness. Some are indeed peasants or of peasant stock. But what has happened? I suppose I must be squarer than square, for not until about a year ago did I discover on talking about Welsh peasants to some avant garde young Catholics that they thought I was talking about Welsh idiots. I knew, of course, that that was Karl Marx's conception of peasants; and I now know that it is not only among proletarian Catholics here and there that Marxist notions have successfully percolated. I was, by the way, recently reading some words of Lenin about the stupidity of members of small nations demanding secession from civilised and prosperous great nations and felt that I might be listening to some of my very earnest and very liberally minded Catholic friends. I notice in this respect that brilliant attack last year in the *Clergy Review* by one 'Mumpsimus' on these good folk. Be sure that 'Mumpsimus' is a fellow countryman of mine. He has to be, though he knows the English very well. He sees exactly what has happened to the users of a too living language.

He sees that an over-zealous concern for "the vernacular" ends in fracture after fracture. He sees that a dead language enabled the faithful to be together. I think I see that "the vernacular" ends in sheer linguistic dissipation unless we are prudent and with publishers bringing out new versions of the liturgy every decade.

Displaced Person

The anonymous common man of our strange time is the man with a welfare state and income tax (PAYE) ticket or two. He is essentially a displaced person, that is, rootless. It hardly matters whether he lives in a council house, has a tinny motor car, or a luxury flat and a yacht. It used to be the fashion to bash the bourgeoisie; but what is the point of that now that the bourgeoisie in failing have con-

quered? The rebel badge of our time is not the hammer and sickle but the collar and tie. And even Marx told the proly: "the elemental of the workers' elemental goes straight forward to subjection by the bourgeoisie." The common man of our time is essentially the diffused bourgeois type, often, alas, without the bourgeois virtues of thrift, reticence, self-reliance, prudence, and temperance.

I do not intend to sneer at this "common man". I do no more than want to display him. He is a casualty, he and his children, who have such extraordinary chances of being educated that, as they become proficient in various technical skills, which is what so many of us think education is about, they are said to have failed in the simpler art of spelling. I have met many of these young clever men and women and am always being made aware that in some respects they are remarkably narrow-minded. They will think it foolish for a poor man in the Welsh equivalent of the Irish Gaeltacht to compose a poem in the strict metre. They have no awareness of the tradition of the poor grammarian and believe that what is called "the brain drain" is simply a question of economics. As to that, were they to meet a friend of mine, a physicist, who insists on staying in his own land whatever be the financial carrot from another land, they would either fail to grasp his point of view or call him an obscurantist ass.

Many of them exhibit the sour grapes of conscious ignorance. For example, many are the clever young Catholics who have told me that they have no intention of attending an eisteddfod in their own land because it contains evident pagan rites. They do not shrink from the pomp and ritual of the parades of the guards in London when that post-heraldic symbol of the nation-state, a flag, is solemnly brought forth.

They may believe that the affairs of the House that broke the Kings require speeding up through reform of the ritual. But they do not condemn the ritual as pagan. They do not, even if they are Good Socialists, object on theological grounds to the casting down of primroses before Lord Beaconsfield's statue once a year. But they half deceive themselves that when a man dressed up in a long robe cries

out in his native tongue, "Is it peace?" before a bard is given an honour for his verse, he is indulging the large audience in some mystic rite of pre-Christian provenance.

We live in a time when the old traditional estates have almost disappeared. We are invited to believe that we are surely "the people" if wisdom indeed shall not perish with us. Ours seems to be an anti-confucianist creed which Chesterton in his brilliant introduction to the Napoleon of Notting Hill (which I read once a year) described as weeping over the graves of our descendants.

God of Isaac not of the Gaps

If I am reasonably right about this cliché, I believe I am equally right concerning "Man Has Come of Age." It is established that it was Dietrich Bonhoeffer who presented it to us. That good and heroic Christian had this to say about the manner in which man has in our time reached a certain completion. "Man has learned to cope with all questions of importance without recourse to God as a working hypothesis. In questions concerning science, art and even ethics, this has become an understood thing which one scarcely dares to tilt at any more."

It is possible that his is a reaction against that peculiar German pietism which he and others have mistaken for religion. But his arbitrary refusal to let me tilt at his obiter dicta I must refuse. Is the Christian one who uses God as a working hypothesis or who finds God convenient for filling gaps which may not be there to be filled? I do not "use God as a working hypothesis" when I receive holy communion. My calvinistic methodist neighbour does not sing Ann Griffiths' "In the midst between two robbers, There the great Atonement died" just to fill in a gap.

Moreover, the gap remains. Indeed, the gap yawns. As we become cleverer in an over-cerebralised way, we meet the tragedy of finitude and know that it is more painful to us than to our ancestors. We who like to believe we are so much more realistic than they were, we who will even defend obscenity if it is "serious" and pretend to find art in

unseemly words (unseemly because without Manners there is no art), still use euphemisms when we can. For example, the realists talk about a man "sleeping" with a woman, when they mean being very awake with her. They have indulged in extraordinary linguistic dissipation over the use of the word "sex" e.g. "to have sex".

They are unlikely to say "Jones is dying". Not so long ago we made a great fuss about a funeral and there was mourning. The other day some clever Dick told us on TV that it was medically sound for the bereaved to have a good cry. With a bit of luck the avant garde will catch up the obscurantist conservatives, who will still mourn at a death and somehow square up to it. Today, the chances are that the dying will go to die institutionally and their corpses will lie in a funeral parlour, which in up-to-date Yankeeedom has been the object of some horribly funny satires.

It is much the same with old men and women (see Senior Citizens). In the highly welfared state of Denmark I visited several Old Folks Homes years before we copied them. I saw in Copenhagen a city within a city known as Old Folks Town, made up of great blocks of flats where the Senior Citizens are subject to apartheid. On the other end of the scale they have long contrived to separate the babes. In a Copenhagen park I saw nurses wheeling them in go-cars that looked like those platform wagons on railway stations—a dozen or so lining the wagon sides. I believe that all this is done in order to maintain the national hedonism. But the Danes, like the other progressive Scands, have a high suicide rate.

The last Act is Tragic

I believe I see something of the same determination to avoid coming to grips with finitude in the growing popularity of cremation. I know all the official arguments. I know that cremation is not only permissible but actually necessary (whether by fire or, say, quicklime) in time of plague or some other great mortality. I am not particularly concerned with some heretical doctrine which at one time gave special alopogetic for the practice. What I do see is that

the increasing use of this method goes hand in hand with the growing lack of any sense of continuity and with the wish to erase the dead from our memories. Death is always tragic. For a man is not just a body and a soul, but body-soul. Death makes a radical rupture with his integrity. (In the liturgy of St. John Chrysostom the priest not only asks the saints to intercede but also prays for them. An orthodox (dissident) told me that the reason was that, except our Lady, they lacked their bodies.)

Let us thank God for all the philanthropic agencies of our time. Yet let us ponder upon the circumstance that they enable us to avoid seeing the botched, the diseased and the insane. Not much more than a century ago the Cockney on Sunday afternoon could go to Bedlam and see the maniacs—a horrible entertainment indeed. As horrible were the public executions which took on the form and ghastly life of a fair round a gallows. But these near-ancestors of ours then came face to face with that frightful evil in the world, which de Maistre wrote about as if he were obsessed with it.

“Toute grandeur, toute puissance, toute subordination repose sur l'exécuteur; il est l'horreur et le lien de l'association humaine. Otez du monde cet agent incompréhensible, dans l'instant même l'ordre fait place au chaos, les trônes s'abîment et la société disparaît.”

Let us say that he was a faulty genius. He must be listened to. His two props, the soldier and the hangman, have not by any means disappeared. Even Israel which never had a death penalty hanged Eichmann. And during the Spanish civil war the *Manchester Guardian* (as then it was) wrote of “the pacifist machine gunners of Madrid”. But still we have our pacifists of the sort who believe it possible to lower the banners of armies with banners in the streets. Now there are the drug addicts who cry out “love” as if love were easy. (In my country we have two words for “love”, “serch” and “cariad”; and certain of our writers have gone so far as to demand that the first is in some way the enemy of the second. They may be right to the extent that the first is natural and that there is a “drag” of nature which we all have to resist.)

A "get out" of this or that horror is to call it an anachronism. To write of something that actually exists as an anachronism is one of the silliest of journalistic tricks. The other day in one of my country's newspapers someone wrote of fox hunting as an anachronism. It is a sport which, like the bull fight, angers many good Christians, who with their neighbours feel that one of the marks of human progress is a gradual disappearance of cruelty. No doubt when Tennyson was writing, many nice people believed in that theory. But after Herbert Spencer came Hitler and Rosenberg and Himmler with the chief Jew-baiter Streicher. In much the same way, a good and kind and very progressive anglican parson told me in tones of authority some two years ago that tribalism in Africa was an anachronism. I hesitated to ask him what he thinks of the way in which tribalism is now to be seen in Nigeria.

The Primordial Temptation

Have we so organised our life that we may sleep easily upon our beds? How safe are our children from murderers? Gross iniquity has stalked through a country village in southern England and upon the moors of the Pennines. The details have filled the Sunday newspapers. And yet we try to avoid the challenge of finitude and the wages of sin. In every department of our lives the challenge of finitude comes in some appropriate mode. The results of our civilisation ought, some would say, to be producing effects opposite to those which they do in fact produce.

For example, many young men and women are suffering from something very much like despair because of a plethora of goods. They now have to find "happenings". Even the good Billy Graham preaches in order to provide them with "happenings".

One of Bonhoeffer's admirers is the modernist Daniel Jenkins who shares with the Bishop of Woolwich the Bonhoeffer testament about "man has come of age", and tells us "man cannot live any more with the gods". I fancy I know what that means. It means that we have begun to believe we are gods. That is the primordial temptation. But

in some stage in some civilisation men did "walk with the gods", not because those men were less intelligent than us but because theirs was a differently attuned intelligence.

If I notice the mind of some freeman of the Roman empire in its late stages, I shall see that it is a mind capable of fine analysis, which in the eastern part of the empire went almost mad on theological hair-splitting. Then came in the West and Dark Ages as we call the age of the gods. It was a time when my country's patron saint could say with his last breath, "be joyful and keep the faith". But to Dewi what did "keep the faith" mean? It did not mean what we mean. For weal or woe we think of keeping the faith as keeping it against un-faith. It is well-nigh impossible for us to think as Dewi thought, because he was thinking as Bernard was thinking: "faith is not an opinion but a certitude". (Enter Abelard.)

If Bonhoeffer were right in saying we should not go back in our own history, we must qualify that by taking into account that we become what we are. "What is grows from what was" (Tyf yr hyn sydd o'r hyn fu) is a saying of my land. But the progressive desperately desires to be something beside himself. In that I see something too near to insanity for comfort. It is not, after all, surprising that a modernist faces the fact that ordinary people are not progressive despite the pressures put on them by progressives.

A. R. Vidler of the Cambridge Set wants us to distinguish between what has been happening to "sensitive minds" on the one hand and "the infantile superstitious majority" on the other. Let us concede this distinction for the moment. If we concede it, we are conceding that, after all, man has not come of age. Only a bunch of self-educated Brahmins have grasped the keys.

But who indeed are these "sensitive intellectuals"? I recall a remark made by a well-known historian about a relative who has a name in English literature. "You know, he really believes that adultery is allowable if done by two who have read the *Phaedo* in the original."

Anyway, it is a dangerous doctrine that we should let "sensitive intellectuals" act as some virtual aristocracy,

which would be far more insolent and cruel than an aristocracy of men in armour. Incidentally, all these progressives take for granted that all the "sensitive intellectuals" will belong in some way to "the party of movement." For them it goes without saying that the sensitive intellectuals will be "anti-fascist". But Hitler would certainly have called himself a sensitive intellectual when he was trying to paint in Vienna.

I have long felt surprised at the few attempts to compose a confrontation. Now and again I notice one, and now and again I find it so very well done that I am even more surprised when the progressives remain as if they had not read it. Perhaps many of them jib. The other day I asked three avant garde Catholics to read a confrontation. Each of them refused. I ought to have known better. I ought to have remembered that there is a curious illiberality in the liberal soul.

In strict theory liberals should be defending the autonomy of the individual reason which, far from producing order leads to chaos. In practice, their reforming zeal tends to be imbued with a certain dictatorial spirit very much like that of the radical-protestants who left Plymouth to be free to worship according to their conscience in New England where they soon enacted draconic legislation against Jesuits and Quakers. Cromwell found that he goeth farthest who doth not know where he goeth. The Jacobins were driven to their deeds like sleep-walkers. Revolution even when masked as reforms plays havoc with rebels, who at length confuse the desire for power among men with freedom, turbulence with force, mere agitation with responsible movement and restlessness with independence.

There is probably a very close connection between temperament and theological bent. That is to say, men of a certain temperament may find, say, calvinism congenial. I believe that this is true for many of my own people among whom I know one who has played a valiant part on behalf of this country, — one who remains an agnostic though always a fierce defender of the calvinistic emphasis or rather false emphasis upon sovereign grace. The majority of the English

do not seem to have this peculiar temperament. It is among them, including good Catholic English, that I hear it said, "So-and-so was a very decent chap and very generous and sportsmanlike," with the evident implication that all will have been well with him at the judgment. That practical pelagianism is much more rife among us today than is healthy. With Max Rahner I dare say that in the sense he intends we need a tiny dose of jansenism, rather as some sick people need a tiny dose of strychnine. I wrote "in the sense he intends": of course, he does not mean jansenism in any formal sense. Indeed, I believe it would have been better had he used another word, — say, augustinianism.

Grandeur and Pettiness of Man

Perhaps Pascal, who is incorrectly called jansenist (he criticised the Jansenists as well as the Jesuits) is the source I have chiefly in mind. For Pascal saw with great clarity not only that man demands to surpass himself, as a recent encyclical approvingly quotes him, but that a true religion must recognise in man his grandeur and his pettiness.

"The greater our enlightenment, the more greatness and vileness we find in man." "As soon as Christianity reveals the principle that human nature is corrupt and has fallen from God, my eyes are opened and I see the mark of this truth everywhere. For nature is such that she testifies everywhere both within and without to a lost God and to her own corruption."

He saw that man is suspended between a spiritual destiny which by himself he cannot fulfil and his animal nature in which he desires not to remain altogether. In our time when the powers of a special kind of science projected by one kind of civilisation, which has the awful mark of expansion, have been multiplied, a man may forget for a short while the tragic in life. Then appears the old hubris in the robes of the laboratory and is broken by the very instruments it forged. Icarus reaches for the sun again and dies again.

CURRENT COMMENT

Centralised planning means government by remote control. The effect of this is to degrade a country's citizens to the level of puppets on a string. In Britain now people are beginning to revolt against this status which has been thrust on them since the war. It looks as if the domination of public life by the puppeteers is coming to a close. The consequences can only be good.

End of the Puppeteers

THE EDITOR

THERE is a revealing passage in Morris West's recent novel, *The Tower of Babel*. In it he speaks of "the esoteric existence of the specialist", what he calls the "fatal fascination of the backstage intimacy of the puppet theatre". It is shared, I am sure, by the members of any government that interprets its task in terms of the centralised control of a nation's life. Their tendency is to remove themselves from the roots of popular action so that their control of the citizen becomes, at one and the same time, remote and increasingly overbearing. They lose touch with a citizenry degraded, however subconsciously, to the level of puppets on a string; frustrated and aimless because denied effective responsibility for that which concerns their lives.

Nanny Knows Best

Under such circumstances, democracy becomes little more than a charade. Representation, of course, exists, but it is largely mechanical, a link without feeling and little more; a veneer behind which the puppeteers operate on the citizenry by remote control. What counts in democracy is participation and there is none of this under such an arrangement because no means of communicating felt needs to the remote controllers or, in the very unlikely event of this being possible, of any effective response from their side. Guided democracy rests, after all, on the assumption that Nanny knows best. It is of its essence that Nanny's will should pre-

vail. Under such circumstances, people feel quite rightly that they are forbidden effective association with those of Nanny's decisions that concern their lives. She has to come out on top otherwise the centralised plan goes by the board. The tendency of the citizens, therefore, is to disassociate themselves from the operations of government. These are carried on now in a vacuum because the government itself is no longer credible in their eyes. The veneer has turned into a smoke-screen so far as the citizens are concerned.

Nkrumah a Case in Point

The last people to realise the gravity of this situation are, of course, the government puppeteers themselves. The system of remote control which removes their decision-making from the public reach serves also to disassociate the public from themselves. The arrogance which prompts their philosophy that Nanny knows best, makes them insensitive to popular feeling. Even when this reaches near boiling-point, they are incapable of reading the signs. So filled are they with a sense of their own leadership that, when disaster strikes, their immediate reaction is to blame not themselves and the system they have created, but the unfortunate citizens whom they themselves have forced to suffer under it — of course, for their own "good". Nkrumah is a case in point. When told in Peking that a successful coup had been mounted in Ghana when his back was turned, he simply could not believe it. "The people love me", he said. So much, that they danced for six weeks in the streets of Accra after he had been overthrown. The reason behind the fury which put him out was summed up by one of the generals who overthrew him. Nkrumah, he said, had taken the country they loved and treated it like a private piece of real estate to be manipulated by him for the public good. This is the mark of the puppeteer.

The Reaction of Wedgewood Benn

In the context of this country, nothing, really, was more pathetic — or more typical — than the address sent to his Bristol constituents by Labour's Minister of Technology, Mr. Wedgewood Benn, in the immediate aftermath of his

Party's shattering defeat in the local elections. The main reason for the disaster, he wrote, was the unpopularity of the Government's economic measures. The implication is that the measures were correct in that they got to the roots of the country's economic crisis and that the crisis itself was not of the Government's making. On both counts, I would suggest, the Minister was wrong. In the last analysis, the crisis is the fruit of a false social philosophy; of centralised planning by remote control, which is the necessary expression of Labour's brand of Socialism. Present measures are incapable of giving it lasting cure precisely because they presuppose the continued existence of the system which has produced the crisis itself. In his address, Wedgwood Benn called indeed for close association by the electorate in the decision-making process of government. What this really means in Socialist eyes is that the kids should hang on to the pram, especially when Nanny is crossing the road; but Nanny is always there. What Wedgwood Benn and his colleagues cannot get into their heads is the simple fact that adults are not children. Their remedy for every crisis — produced, as most of them are in the last analysis, by their system of centralised planning by remote control — is to apply immortal words which the great Belloc used in a happier context: "Always keep tight hold of nurse, for fear of finding something worse". The Labour Party has yet to outgrow the implications of this nonsensical recommendation which has been with them since the time of the Webbs.

Enoch Powell at Chippenham

The same applies, though to a lesser extent, to most of their Tory opposite numbers. The only man amongst them plainly and publicly to have derided the presumptions behind contemporary Socialist policy is Enoch Powell. I am not referring to his Wolverhampton speech, but to that which he made at Chippenham in the immediate aftermath of his Party's massive victory in the local government elections. It stands in marked contrast to the address of Wedgwood Benn already referred to. At Chippenham, Powell argued trenchantly against the Labour Government's present policy

of compulsory incomes regulation, along with the Socialist mentality that has produced it. Mr. Wilson and his colleagues have been quick to blame the present inflation on trade-union pressure in the interests of higher wages. In reality, Powell argued at Chippenham, the inflation we have is the result of gross government expenditure in the interests of centralised planning, which rests on the arrogant Socialist presumption that government knows what is good for the people better than they know it themselves. There were powerful passages in Powell's speech. Some should be quoted:

"The entire trade union movement", he said, "has been brought to accept that the trade unions are responsible, wholly or partly, for rising prices and the falling value of money. It is a really astonishing spectacle; the trade unions have clapped the handcuffs on to their own wrists, gone into the dock and pleaded guilty to causing inflation.

"Governments and the attendant hosts of commentators and propagandists have executed what is perhaps the greatest confidence trick in the history of all time, the confidence trick on a huge scale. They have chosen inflation year after year, and at the same time persuaded everyone that someone else was to blame. It is equivalent to stealing a man's wallet and then locking him up for theft. The achievement is all the more remarkable because the facts are so blatant . . .

"Yet by the unanimous din year in year out which has been proclaiming that all this is the fault of the people themselves, they've been cowed into a condition of passive acquiescence in the absurd charge. In that condition, they are vulnerable to the next stage of the operation, which is to subject them to the control of a dictatorship, benign, bureaucratic, even parliamentary, but still a dictatorship, which is to prescribe and enforce the whole content of their lives — prices, wages, production, the lot. This is the operation of which Mrs. Castle has been put in nominal charge."

Beginnings of Revolt

It is against this that the country is beginning to revolt; against government taking increasing charge of the citizens' affairs in the interests of an alien and false philosophy, which

they sense as out of keeping with the best traditions of their country and their own dignity as human beings. At the moment, feeling against the system is vague, but steadily mounting: what riles ordinary folk is their growing awareness that they are steadily being excluded from decisions that affect their lives. They sense a constriction in that area of responsible decision-making which belongs to every citizen by right of his human nature, not by favour of the State. They cannot formulate their grievances, but they know there is something wrong and that it goes deep, striking right into their moral guts. There is growing unease. Decent men of all classes give vent to it when they talk with exasperation of "the system" and refer in terms of increasing contempt to members of the present Government.

Against Government from on High

Because most Socialists are blinkered, they remain wedded to the present system. They know no other. Their remedy for every crisis is to exhort the kids to hold still tighter to Nanny's hand. A good many Tories, particularly of the Bow Group breed, share the same sort of outlook or are vaguely in favour of it. At heart, they do not trust the people any more than the Socialists do; they think they ought to be managed. They are without the perception or the courage to speake the truth that Powell spoke at Chippenham. They think of Britain's future only in terms of more effective management. They are remote from the people and moving away from them faster than they think. Their remedy for the present discontent is a change of management or, if you like, the replacement of Nanny with a good PRO, who will badger citizens no longer, but tell them in cultured language still to hang on to the pram. Under the Tories the pram will still be there. What the people are beginning to see is that it shouldn't be; that the system itself needs a change. They are beginning to see also that they are ahead of the politicians in this regard; that the analysis of the men at Westminster, irrespective of Party, is still only skin-deep. It is for this reason that ordinary folk in this country are moving mentally out of politics, except to turn on one Party

or the other from time to time to give it a clobbering by way of protest and nothing more. The Tories would be foolish if they saw in the recent local elections a vote of confidence in themselves. It was essentially a gesture of disgust levelled at the Labour Party; a protest against government from on high as upheld to a greater or less degree — with or without ideological trappings — by both Parties at the present time.

Nationalists and Dockers

This, really, is what contemporary Scots Nationalism is all about. This also is why the dockers marched on Parliament and kicked Ian Mikardo's shins in the Central Lobby of the House of Commons. This is why Lord Derby on May 13th announced his resignation from the Lord Lieutenancy of Lancashire to devote his energies, as he said, to the cause of England's neglected North, raising the standard, one might say, of Northern Nationalism and showing himself more closely aligned thereby to Mrs. Winifred Ewing and her Scots Nationalists than to the Leader of his Party, Mr. Edward Heath. In every case, the impulse is of decent and loyal citizens of this Kingdom to take responsibility for their own lives once more into their own hands. In this, I am with them heart and soul. I do not see how I could be anything else, for it is their right under God to do so. One can say this and never be an Anarchist; simply a Christian stating what should be the obvious to all, but is recognised, in fact, only by a few.

Signs of the Times

It is important to read the signs of the times. What we are witnessing now are the first beginnings, at grass-roots level, of what may soon be a nation-wide effort by the people of this country to rediscover their national identity; a resurgence, in other words, of real patriotism, the essential foundation of any true internationalism as distinct from that type of arid cosmopolitanism which, since the close of the last war, has demeaned and degraded our lives. We are, I think, at a crisis period in the history of this country as we move out of the shaming days of the past twenty years, when the progressives took charge of its life and sought to impose

on its people a tinsel future of their own devising. They have brought us about as low as we have ever been in our history. Their crime is to have made England fit only for mediocrities like themselves. The measure of their "accomplishment" is typified in the case of London. They found it the heart of an Empire, proud of its great history; they left it "swinging London", the abortion centre of the world; the place to which you come to have your unborn child killed — most charmingly, of course, and most efficiently, on the National Health. London, a city of death; this is what the Lilac Establishment has given us. Those who love this city and its people will never rest till they have wiped away the shame not only of London's stigma, but of that which the progressives have laid everywhere across this country, dripping poison as they go; the godless, pseudo-intellectual fringe of Britain's middle class who have striven so hard since the war to rob us of the heritage for which we fought so long; the bankrupt intelligentsia without a moral clue who have had the enormous impertinence to try and make this country in their own messy image. They have not succeeded, though they have left a trail of desecration behind them. Now the movement to oust them has begun; for the first time in years there is a gleam of light at the end of the tunnel. History, I believe, will record of the time that is coming that the British people neither gave way wholly to libertinarianism nor sought salvation in a totalitarian straight-jacket; that, in the end, they sought refuge in no alien or false ideologies, but found strength under God in their own roots. I think this is how it will be. The thought fills me with hope.

Catholics Have a Part

In the whole of this process, of course, the Catholic laity have a significant part to play. They will do so effectively to the extent that they see their vocation as that of actively influencing contemporary English society, not fitting passively into it. For too long this is what their schools have taught them to do and it has left its mark on them. They are still without real knowledge of the connection between religion

and the society to which they belong, of the duty that is theirs, as responsible Christian citizens, to exert influence on the existing political and social order in such a way that it comes to rest on a foundation built out of respect for man and his dignity. The inclination of most Catholics in this country today is to follow the crowd and conform to the party line, to accept what they find instead of seeking to change it. They are unable to think of themselves as influencing the trend of events and the reason for this lies ultimately in their unawareness of the riches of their Faith and the power for good of its social teaching. For this they are not to be blamed. The fault lies rather with those who taught them their Faith in the past primarily as a list of duties to be observed, not as a life to be lived. Amongst the most urgent needs confronting the Catholic Body in any country at present is that of teaching the young Faithful their religion in such a way that its riches are laid out before their eyes. Once they see their religion in terms of life, they will willingly take it to others, talk about it and strive for it in such a way that they leave its impress on contemporary society, influencing its evolution in the direction of increasing respect for the dignity and rights of the human beings who are its citizens.

Influencing the Temporal

The great task of the layman in this day and age, as the second Vatican Council made abundantly clear, is to influence the temporal order. He is to act on it and apply Christian principles to it in his capacity as a responsible Christian citizen. As such, the political, economic and social fields are open to his positive efforts as they cannot be to those of the Institutional Church and its organizations. Apart from the enunciation of principle and the denunciation of secular abuse, it is difficult to see what ways are open to the Institutional Church of influencing directly a nation's political and social life; but the individual Catholic, in his capacity as a responsible citizen, has the political and social fields open to him and should make it his business to bring Christian principles to bear on the decisions that are made in both. It

is through his activity in this regard that the weight of Christian influence will make itself felt in the only way possible; on political and social decisions affecting the dignity and rights of the citizen.

New Commissions and Layman's Task

I may be quite wrong and I hope I am not impertinent; but I see little realization of the need for this type of action in the decision taken recently to set up in the Church in this country new mixed Commissions of clergy and laity, presumably with a view to update the Church in accordance with the recommendations of Vatican II. The Commissions, no doubt, will do much good. Presumably, one of their main effects will be to associate the laity much more closely with the work of the Institutional Church. This does not mean, however, that they will necessarily be associated more closely with the world — in it, but not of it — in their capacity as responsible Christian citizens. In fact, the new Commissions could have the reverse effect, enmeshing the layman within the structure of the Institutional Church in such a way and to such an extent that he is diverted from his true vocation which is that of influencing the structure of contemporary society in the interests of human dignity. Were that to prove the case, the post-conciliar effort of English Catholics would have come full circle; the machinery set up to take them out of the sacristy and into the world would have resulted merely in the construction of a larger and more streamlined sacristy, and nothing more.

The process may have begun already. Mr. Kevin Muir, Secretary of the Commission on Laity, was reported recently as saying that its job was to investigate how the layman could be present and vocal at those points where Church decisions were taken. So far so good, but is this all? I would have thought that the primary task of the Catholic layman today was to be present at those points where decisions are taken affecting the dignity of the citizen and his rights as a human being. So far as he is concerned, this means in the first place the world, not the sacristy, however efficient its running may be.

The increasing use of violence in demonstrations, strikes, and in what were once peaceful processions must have been observed by all. The violence now is not used to lever a party or a conspiracy into power, but is aimed rather at securing immediate ends. The people everywhere seem to have lost all patience with political parties of every complexion. The peril of this situation is obvious. How much longer will we try to "set the time-table for another man's freedom"?

Violence

E. L. WAY

OF course there is nothing new in violence. It is as old as Cain. It has always stalked in the background as the ultimate sanction of the state. And the notion, popular in democracies, that the consent of the people is necessary for the continuance of any particular government is a myth. Democrats argue that tyrants cannot long survive, that sooner or later they are deposed or murdered. And they point to the dictators of our time as conclusive proofs of their thesis. They would argue that Hitler killing himself in a bunker in Berlin, and Mussolini dying by an assassin's bullet are illustrations of what they maintain. They would go on to stress that even in communist states the bullet and the hangman's rope are being replaced by enforced resignations. Krushchev is still alive. And in Czechoslovakia the man who has wielded power over the country for a decade, President Novotny, has resigned. And he has been followed into the political wilderness of impotence by a whole flock of state officials and party men. What these democrats do not mention is that the new president of the republic, General Ludvik Svoboda, was a Minister of defence from 1945 to 1950. In that position he made sure that the army stood

behind the communists during the coup of 1948. The General has lost no time in making his position clear. In reference to the rehabilitation of the 30,000 cases of persons wrongly accused and penalized as well as the victims of the purge trials, he said, "We want only justice; there is after all a difference between democracy and demagoguery". The democracy of the oppressed is always demagoguery to the privileged oppressors.

Revolution against the Weak

Another thing that the democrats forget is that the revolutions of history have nearly always been against weak governments. There was no revolt against Cromwell but against Charles I, no revolt against Stalin but against the ridiculous Tzar Nicholas, no revolt against Napoleon but against Louis XVI, no march on Rome against Mussolini but against Victor Emmanuel. Indeed the Italian king could have dispersed the march in a few minutes if he had called out the regular troops under Badoglio, but he refused to sign the decree of martial law presented to him by his premier, Facta. And on that day he put an end to the Italian monarchy, though it lingered on pathetically until after the second world war. If there is any lesson to be learned from history it is the mealncholy one that nothing succeeds so well as violence. The only consistent losers are the people. They substitute a Cromwell for a Charles, a Stalin for a Nicholas, the rubber truncheons of Hitler's secret police for the more constitutional methods of a Hindenburg or a Brüning, the castor oil of Mussolini's police for the unpunctuality of the transport system of the democracy which existed before he came to power.

Plague on Both your Houses

The present feelings of political frustration and dismay in England are simply explained. She is no longer a world power. After playing the major role on the world's political stage she is "resting", as actors say when they are without jobs. Her industrialists must find foreign markets for their goods. They can no longer rely on the home market. With

but mediocre results they have been trying since the war, and they have blamed successive governments and the workers, everyone but themselves, in fact.

The two chief political parties are past their "dancing days". And cut very foolish figures as dowagers in the Come Dancing competitions. The Tory party is the international bankers' party, full of promise and performance for the privileged sections of society, but useless to the widow, the retired, the sick, the orphan, and the worker with a weekly wage packet. These folk are only offered harder work, sweat, and bad temper, and a curb on the unions. The Labour Party is a prisoner of the Bankers. Its policies are determined by men not elected by the people, but by money power. Sometimes we catch sight of them on the television screen. Their pursuit of wealth has drained them of life, they have the faces of corpses, and their insides are ulcerated. In utter disgust the English people have called:

"A plague o' both your houses !
They have made worms' meat of me."

Communism

Why have the English people not turned to Communism ? This party has always maintained that money power will not yield a penny without a struggle. It must be destroyed. The communists argue that the wealth of a nation is created by the people, and should be justly distributed amongst the people. It also argues that capitalism is frequently on the verge of an international monetary crisis or a recession of world trade. And just recently we have been aghast at the spectacle of the richest nation on earth torn by civil strife, its trade in deficit, and its most powerful minister refusing to stand again for the presidency. No one is going to contend that capitalism as a system has half the answers. In its stronghold, the U.S.A., we have white women too poor to wear shoes and stockings. A trip around Pike County, Kentucky, will reveal a countryside which the industrialists have stripped bare of earth by gouging the coal from the surface. Cabins lower down the mountainside have been swept away by

cascades of slag and falling earth. The profits made have been staggering: one major company in 1965 reported making 61 per cent. But the people are miserable. Half the families are saved from starvation by the distribution of surplus government foodstuffs. There are cases of crippling malnutrition. (In the past the coal bosses used to castrate or shoot men who tried to organise unions. Now they brand them as communists, and have them arrested.) The people are on relief, and though they have the ballot it can be purchased for a bottle of whiskey.

Stalin

The people of England and America have turned away from the communists not because of their Christian faith. The majority of both nations only enter a church to be "hatched, matched, and despatched". They are rightly suspicious of communism because it breeds Stalins. And no one wants a Stalin in exchange for an ulcerated banker. The banker may in the near future reduce us to the use of oil lamps. And if our wages are held down forcibly while prices steadily increase we will be forced to many strange expedients. Poverty is just around the corner for many millions of people who in the past never had it so good. But whatever the cost in suffering we are a bankers' democracy rather than a people's democracy. We vote for callous Cox or impotent Box. What else is there ?

Violence

The horrifying answer is violence. Everywhere you look to-day you note the spread of violence. It is as if a number of super oil tankers had broken up on the rocks of the seven seas, and the oil slicks were washing up on all the beaches of the world. We are all polluted and ashamed. But men are not using violence to achieve power for political parties. They distrust political parties. They speak of them with the utmost contempt. Nor do they want the castor oil of Fascism, nor the rubber truncheons of the Nazis, who were both in their time supported by rich industrialists, nor the bullet in the base of the skull in the Lubianka prison. But increasingly

they will use violence to bring swift redress to unbearable wrongs. The negroes of America, the students of Paris, and strikers all over the world, are learning a terrible lesson. It is that unless you are violent you will be ignored. Hungry, jobless people, rotting in slums, are not going to sit down and fold their hands while the bankers fiddle with the money, or the commisars juggle with the norms.

Myth of Time

Of course the soldiers and the police will be called out. Men and women will be shot down. The police dogs, riot weapons, and nerve gas that puts you out for twenty minutes, will all be used. The rioters will reply with bricks and home-made bombs. It will be anything but a picnic. But the bullet that put an end to Dr. Martin Luther King did not put an end to the cause for which he died. His overwhelming eloquence lives on. He had an undying dream. The poor whites in Europe and America will not be slow to learn the lesson. And I repeat, the lesson is that unless you use violence you are ignored. Dr. Martin Luther King put the case for the poor of all the earth in his *Letter from Prison*. He wrote "I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negroes' great stumbling-block in the stride toward freedom is not the White Citizens' 'Councillor' or the Klu Klux Klanner, but the white moderate who is more devoted to 'order' than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice: who constantly says 'I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I can't agree with your methods of direct action'; who paternalistically feels that he can set the time-table for another man's freedom; who lives by the myth of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait until a 'more convenient season.'" Waiting for more convenient seasons is now over. We must choose justice or violence, and we must choose to-day.

MONTHLY REPORT

With the problem of the underdeveloped nations growing larger every day, the need for a careful look at possible ways of assisting them is becoming more important.

Essentials of Overseas Aid

JOHN TWIST, S.J.

NUMEROUS T.V. documentaries, charitable appeals, newspaper articles explaining the plight of the underdeveloped nations have brought home to the public the seriousness of a situation in which two-thirds of the world's population is underfed. Looking at one of these photographs of a starving child jammed between advertisements for the best food and wine on the market may well induce in an overweight citizen of the other third an unpleasant feeling of guilt. Whether we like it or not we are only too well aware of the difference between 'them' and 'us', even though we are not very clear on what we ought to do about it. Straightforward appeals for cash and clothing of the '10/- will provide a child with milk for a month' type, make an impact because they are so practical; but it would be naïve to imagine that economic aid consists only in this.

Relief and Development

The 'do something now' approach, while it can be of immense help in giving immediate relief for disasters — famine, droughts, earthquakes etc. — is obviously not going to cure the underlying causes of hardship in the underdeveloped nations. Hearing of constant malnutrition, of dire poverty, of the increasing 'gap' between the rich and poor nations, has steadily brought home to every individual who shows any concern, the fact that world poverty can only be solved by long term economic planning involving basic changes in the structures of the backward nations. More and more it is being realised that in the long run what is needed

is some way of enabling the backward nations to stand on their own feet, and take their place as equals in the world's markets. It will help to avoid confusion, therefore, if aid for economic development is not mixed up with disaster relief.

The gradual realisation that the only permanent cure for world poverty is the sound economic development of the under-developed nations, leads one to search for the methods by which this development can be achieved — a difficult and complicated problem. The instinctive solution is to suggest that it is simply a matter of extracting more aid from the rich countries: it all boils down to an imbalance of wealth, it is argued, so let us just share it out more evenly. But this view is misleading: the root trouble is not simply that the poor countries are not getting a fair slice of the international cake, but rather that they have not developed their resources as the rich countries have theirs. The poverty from which they suffer must be overcome by the people themselves developing their economy to its full potentialities.

An economy is a structure which enables a country to exploit its resources. In a developed economy one expects to find a fair measure of industrialisation ensuring that the country is producing more than just primary products, international trade, a basic communications system, and a variety of exports preserving the country from excessive dependence on a single item which may fluctuate wildly on the world market.

It is important to realise that the great number of countries classified as underdeveloped are by no means all of one type: each country is different and it will not do to assume that hordes of excess population dwelling in trackless wastes are the norm. Some countries such as India encounter grave difficulties because of their huge populations, others however would find their sparsely distributed peoples a hindrance to industrialisation. A number of countries have managed to establish a stable political structure with an honest civil service, essential if any development programme is to succeed; others however suffer from corrupt administrations and short-lived petty dictators which effectively ensure that no development can even get started. There are variations in natural

resources, educational standards, trading links etc. All in all, the generalisations which can be made about underdeveloped countries will require modifying to suit each particular case.

Economic Potential

It is astonishing to realize how rich some underdeveloped countries could be if their potentialities were properly exploited. The Congo for instance is very rich in mineral deposits. If such countries were developed, there is no reason why they should not have economies which are as healthy as those of the advanced nations. At the same time the transition from a primitive economy to a developed one can only take place where conditions are suitable for growth, and aid from the richer countries can only be effective where these conditions obtain. The need for political stability has already been mentioned; there is also a need for resources which can be developed (not necessarily natural resources c.f. Japan); it is essential that the people of the underdeveloped nation should be ambitious to improve their lot, so that they may make the best possible use of any aid.

From what has been said it can be inferred that economic development cannot come simply from the outside but can only be assisted from the outside. It is like the educational process: the student can be assisted by the teacher, but in the last analysis he must learn for himself. In economic development, as in so many forms of progress, God helps those who help themselves. So in examining the various ways in which aid can be given to the backward nations it must be remembered that the aim is not to pour vast amounts of capital from rich nations into poor ones, in the Robin Hood style, but to assist the poor countries to bring about their own development.

Three ways in which backward nations can be assisted will be considered, but first it is necessary to exclude that form of aid which can be called relief. Hence special disaster funds to help victims of earthquakes, consignments of clothing, shipments of food such as the United States' grain shipments to India in recent years, should be regarded as relief rather

than aid for development, since, although obviously highly important in themselves, they are not designed to help the economic development of a country.

Private Investment

Perhaps the biggest investments in underdeveloped countries are made by private trading concerns which, for purely commercial reasons, find it worthwhile to put capital into enterprises for exploiting virgin resources. These concerns invest in oil, mines, rubber, sugar and other raw materials or commodities; there is also industrial investment in some cases—a factory for assembling machinery which will be used in the backward country for instance. Such commercial investment is sometimes written off as ‘capitalistic exploitation’ or ‘neo-colonial oppression’, but in fact it has both advantages and disadvantages to the undeveloped country. On the one hand it is an effective way of opening up a country’s resources and financing their development, while at the same time ensuring a successful export market for its products; what is more it provides the competence and expertise necessary for the successful development of resources such as oil, and can show a country the need for efficiency and hard work for successful development. Against these considerations it may be said that commercial investors are, of course, only interested in the acquisition of profits. Hence it happens that no effort is made to ensure a balanced growth of different industries, but certain lucrative resources are exploited to the full. Most of the backward nations rely heavily on one commodity as their chief export and are at the mercy of price fluctuations in that product. For example Zambia depends heavily on copper exports, lucrative at the moment but very unrewarding about 7 years ago. What is more the commercial investor may well wish to withdraw all his profits from the country, and will always beware of committing his assets too fully in case they should be expropriated or nationalised. (That is one reason why unstable political structures prevent development; investors consider them too risky and take their money elsewhere.)

It is often argued that development requires a nation to

have a certain amount of industrialisation, so that it can produce manufactured goods as well as commodities, and will not have to import all manufactures. It is understandable therefore that a backward nation should feel rather irritated that a foreign oil company say, should extract its crude oil and yet refuse to refine it in the country because it is reluctant to risk any more investment there than is essential.

Tied Loans and Grants

A number of advanced countries have been making loans or grants to the undeveloped nations, especially since the war. Usually these are tied loans or grants, that is, the receiving country must use the money to buy goods from the donor country. It is often argued that such tied loans are a form of colonialism by the back door, and that any genuine loan ought to leave the borrower free to use the money as he thinks best. This is too idealistic. Nearly all the advanced nations have chronic balance of payments which, if used to buy goods from foreign nations, will appear as imports on their accounts requiring foreign currency to pay for them. What is more, they will have no imported goods to show for the payment. One can hardly see the U.S.A. having its dollars used to buy Russian goods or vice-versa !

However it is also argued against tied loans that they are apt to force the borrowing nation to buy goods which it may not really regard as the most suitable, because it cannot go to another country to get the ones it wants. There is something in this, but by and large the goods which a backward nation requires are not so sophisticated that it cannot obtain them from the nation granting the loan; in an aid programme to a primitive country we are not concerned with buying the latest Jet-planes.

When it comes to untied loans and grants the United Nations is perhaps the best agency for distributing them. One safeguard of the tied loan was that it ensured that the money was spent on genuine projects for the nation's development. The practice was that a nation which wanted a steel mill for instance, would have it built by a developed nation and 'borrow' the money to pay for it: that is, the cost of

the mill would be a loan from the supplying nation. Now if a loan is not tied, the way in which it is disposed of depends on the borrowing nation, and some such nations have wasted the money on prestige projects designed for impression rather than development: Accra boasts a magnificent international conference stadium built by President Nkrumah with somebody's money.

Untied Loans and Credits

Backward nations are understandably reluctant to have their development projects approved by the richer countries, but as members of the United Nations they are more willing to accept some form of control from that body. Moreover the attempts to promote economic development in recent years have brought to light the need to do detailed preliminary investigations before a development project is embarked upon: the United Nations has evolved expert agencies to do these investigations. If a policy of untied loans and grants to underdeveloped countries is to be successful (at the moment the amounts of such aid are not very large) then it seems that it will have to be executed by the United Nations. A brief look at the methods and organisation of the U.N. aid structure may help to show how it can assist the backward nations.

Function of the United Nations

The United Nations has a number of Specialised Agencies designed to assist in solving international problems of health, labour, food shortage etc. Thus the World Health Organisation attempts to investigate health problems and the ways they can be tackled in any particular country: schemes for removing the danger of malaria are worked out, data collected on the effects of malnutrition and so on. The Food and Agricultural Organisation investigates ways of improving food production. As regards funds, these Specialised bodies draw their funds from three sources. There is the normal budget. Then there are grants from the Technical Assistance Programme, a body providing trained men for special projects in underdeveloped countries, the projects being

administered by the Specialised Agencies. The United Nations Special Fund is the third source of revenue, providing money for detailed preliminary investigation of proposed projects. The Specialised Agencies and the U.N. Secretariat are mainly concerned with grants rather than loans, their funds often being spent on comparatively small but important projects.

The system of loans administered through the U.N. has grown up as a result of certain talks held towards the end of the last war at which it was decided to set up a fund to help countries with their balance of payments difficulties. From this fund, known as the International Monetary Fund, a new body grew up called the World Bank (or The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development). The Bank drew its inspiration from the International Monetary Fund, and had as its special purpose the financing of development projects. Although the Bank is not confined in its lending activities to underdeveloped countries, and has always operated on a strictly commercial basis charging market rates of interest, it has come to play an important role in assisting developing countries. In order to provide for the long term loans which the underdeveloped nations require, a third organisation called the International Development Association was set up with the assistance of the World Bank.

The lending activities of the World Bank, even though under such strict conditions, did illustrate one major point: a nation which is able to borrow money from the Bank on a commercial basis is well on the way to being able to raise capital on the major money markets of the world. Japan, which had become a regular client of the World Bank after the war, attained such a reputation for creditworthiness that eventually she was able to raise funds on the capital market. While one would hardly expect such success in every developing nation, it does nevertheless underline the need a poor country has for stability in order to attract capital for its development projects.

This point of the need for stability as a condition for development has been insisted upon, because it can happen that among all the clamour for immediate action to help the

starving millions, and the insistence on loans with no neo-colonial strings attached, attention will be diverted from the hard facts of the case. Indeed it may be that it is well-nigh impossible to assist some of the most unstable of the backward nations, and in so far as such a nation with a corrupt leadership is to be assisted at all, it can only be done if there are very strict conditions on the way the money is to be spent. One simply cannot expect public bodies or private investors to lend or donate monies to poor countries unless they are convinced that it will be spent on useful projects.

Principles of Aid

Amidst the variety of possible forms of economic aid, and considering the differences between the various under-developed countries, it may well appear from what has been said that it is well-nigh impossible to lay down general rules for the form that aid should take. But while it is a good thing to realize that the problem of assisting the backward nation is more than one of simply persuading the rich peoples to dig into their pockets, it does seem that with careful thought one can give some indications of the principles of economic aid. The plight of the poor nations has led to a lot of serious thought to find the best way to assist them, and the efforts that have been made both by individual countries and the United Nations since the war, have provided some experience of successful and unsuccessful methods. Some of the lessons learnt can be set out as a guide to the future thought on development.

(1) Careful planning

The universal poverty of the two-thirds can give the impression of a homogeneous mass of people all in the same sorry predicament. However the first result of attempting to bring concrete aid to such peoples is the realisation that their problems are very different, and that aid will have to be tailor-made to fit each particular case. Differences in resources, political situation, population etc. have already been mentioned, and any plan for aid must take into account all these factors. But actual development projects must be

even more carefully planned to meet the needs of the particular case. For example suppose a country has a river which might be dammed to produce electricity and irrigation water. It will be necessary to investigate precisely the extent of the river's potentialities. Then there is the question of how the electricity and irrigation water is going to be used: is there industry requiring electricity nearby, or is industry planned? It is obvious that in order to assist with this project specialised investigations must be carried out in advance, and careful plans laid for the utilisation of the project. It might be that such investigation indicated that the return on the investment was not sufficient to justify the cost, or that the project would be more useful at a later stage in the country's development. Catering for the needs of each particular case in this fashion brings to light one of the great benefits which intelligent aid to backward nations can bring: economic development can be planned to the best advantage and the future situation taken into account. This is where the U.N. Specialised Agencies have so much to offer bringing an international experience to each country. At the same time failure to observe the unique nature of each case, by assuming that development must follow the model of the Industrial Revolution for instance, can result in development plans failing to achieve their purpose. Something will be said about this in the next section.

(2) Natural Development

Most underdeveloped economies are predominantly agricultural, the population concentrating on producing sufficient food to keep themselves and usually not farming on any large scale. Indeed often enough nearly all the population lives by agriculture, so there is little market for selling farmed products and everyone is concerned only with providing food for themselves. Development of such an economy, it has been argued, consists in industrialising it on the western model. Hence steel plants are introduced and factories set up, and many of the rural population (who are not doing much on the farms) are encouraged to come and work. But such a method of development can (and in actual cases has)

run into major difficulties: because the country is poor there is no real market for the industrial products; unless agricultural methods are changed no food is produced for the new town dwellers; for industrialisation to succeed a set of trained workers is necessary, this requires educational facilities; finally, industrial products can often be produced much more cheaply in advanced nations. If instead of industrialisation a programme of agricultural development had been embarked upon growing produce for export, the above difficulties would not have arisen, at least not so acutely, but a firm foundation would have been laid for industrialisation at a later date. The principle underlying this argument is that economic development ought to be natural rather than forced, since the introduction of new projects 'from above' can mean that a country is not able to adapt itself to them. Communist countries have been able to introduce industrialisation in a forced manner (as in the case of China), but their success is due to the universal control which they are able to exercise over the activities and aspirations of their peoples. The importance of encouraging natural development in aid programmes is underlined by the fact that the people of a backward nation may not be convinced of the need for change. It is easy enough for an individual from a wealthy nation to see the advantages of industrialisation, trade, education and so on, but to the man who has always found a simple but secure livelihood on a farm the plunge into industrialisation may well seem to deprive him of any security he had. And without the enthusiastic cooperation of the people no aid coming from outside is going to have much effect.

(3) Ability to use Aid

This brings us on to the third lesson which can be learnt from the experience of assisting developing countries: aid must be designed to enable the backward country to develop itself, it must not be a substitute for effort by the backward nation. This seemingly obvious point has some important and rather harsh consequences. First, economic development is a slow and painful process: the people must be convinced

of the need for improvement, a sound educational system must be built up, a new way of life must be accepted as the nation changes from a primitive to an advanced state; to achieve all this more is required than large sums of cash from the rich countries. Second, aid from outside is impossible unless conditions inside the country encourage genuine improvement of its people. Thus where there is unstable political leadership or a corrupt administration it may be necessary to leave a poor nation 'in the lurch' because circumstances do not allow aid from outside to be effective.

Role of the Advanced Nations

Since the aid for the poor countries must come from the rich nations it is worth noticing the extent to which the latter might be prepared to go on contributing to their poorer neighbours. Two factors prevent such aid from reaching really large proportions. 1. Selfishness. 2. Balance of payments difficulties which aid in any form other than the export of home produced goods is likely to aggravate. Anyone living in Great Britain is aware how big a thorn in the flesh the balance of payments problem can be. What untied aid there is tends to go through the U.N. and this would seem the best arrangement for it. All rich countries can give a proportion of their national income to the U.N. which will administer it as it thinks best; the more of these funds available to the U.N. the better (at present they are quite inadequate).

A final point perhaps of lesser importance to the developing nations at this stage than it will become in the future, is the need for big economic units. The examples of the United States and the European Common Market, as indeed the Soviet Bloc, all show that a modern economy is most effective when it is catering for large numbers of people (say 200,000,000 or more), while individual backward nations themselves experience difficulty when they have to rely on one central commodity for their wealth. A common market of a number of backward countries would enable them to share their difficulties by having a variety of products which could circulate within the market or be exported.

THE INDUSTRIAL ANGLE

Dr. Jackson in an extremely lucid article explains what the international monetary crisis was about, how the system works, how it is linked to America's and our own balance of payments deficits, and, not being a worshipper of gold, suggests that we stop digging for it and devise a rational international credit system.

The Gold Crisis

J. M. JACKSON

IT is only too obvious that in the post-war years, Britain has staggered from one economic crisis to another. The devaluation of the pound in 1967 was the culmination of another such crisis. At the same time, however, another crisis was beginning to make itself apparent. Towards the end of 1967 the demand for gold was increasing. More and more people were trying to buy gold on the big markets of the world. The demand for gold increased again in the early months of 1968, reaching a climax in the first half of March. The climax came with the closing of the London gold market the weekend before the Chancellor of the Exchequer was due to introduce his anxiously awaited austerity budget on Tuesday, March 19th. It was becoming increasingly obvious that this demand for gold was precipitating a crisis of far more serious proportions than anything the western world had experienced in the post-war years. There was talk of the breakdown of the international monetary system and a serious threat to the level of world trade. It would not be going too far to say that some observers were clearly thinking in terms of the possibility of a depression such as we had experienced in the 'thirties. Yet whilst most people could hardly be unaware of this crisis, few probably understood what was happening.

The purpose of this article is to try and explain what is involved in this crisis, how the international monetary system works, how it is linked to our own and America's balance of payments difficulties, and how the present system might be improved. In writing for a periodical such as this, there is always the danger that some major development will have occurred between the writing of the article and the date of publication. Whilst it is advantageous to be up to date, it need not alter the usefulness of this article too much if important developments have occurred. The basic issues involved remain the same, and if this article achieves its purpose it should help the reader to understand what may happen as well as what has happened.

The Role of Gold

For centuries, gold has played an important part in international trade. It has long been a valuable metal, and it has therefore been readily acceptable as a means of payment. People have grown accustomed to the use of gold for monetary purposes. Until 1914, the British currency was based on the gold sovereign. A £5 Bank of England note could always be presented at the Bank and exchanged for five golden sovereigns. Since 1914, we have not used gold coins, though between 1925 and 1931 it was possible to obtain gold in large ingots from the Bank of England at a fixed price. Even to-day, in the United States the note issue must be backed by gold in the vaults of the banks. For the most part, however, gold is now used mainly for the settlement of international indebtedness. The reason for this is simple, though not entirely valid. We all know that the currency of a country can lose its value. We all know that a pound to-day will not buy as much goods and services as it did ten years ago. Prices have risen, which is only another way of saying that the value of the pound has declined. Because this can happen to any currency, sometimes at a disastrous rate, there is a need for some more stable measure of value in international economic relations.

Under the pre-1944 gold standard, movements of gold

played an important part in regulating world trade. At least, many people believed this. In the period before 1914, most countries had currencies that were readily convertible into gold, and the total amount of money permitted to circulate in the country was therefore closely linked to the amount of gold in the countries' central banks. A country that had a balance of payments deficit (that is, was importing more than it could pay for by its exports) had to meet this deficit by paying in gold. The running down of its gold reserves meant that it had to curtail the amount of money circulating in the country and this, it was believed, would bring down prices. With lower prices, it would tend to increase its exports and so achieve a balance of payments equilibrium. Equally, the countries that had a balance of payments surplus would be acquiring increased stocks of gold, could increase their money supplies, leading to higher prices and falling exports. Thus the process of adjustment was shared between the deficit and surplus countries. But in practice things did not work quite like this. They may, before 1914, have been working in a manner fairly similar to this, but after World War I the real mechanism of adjustment proved to be quite different.

Income Adjustment

The theory underlying the gold standard was that prices moved in proportion to the quantity of money in circulation. The mechanism of adjustment described above is likely to break down for two reasons. Firstly, the authorities in countries that are receiving gold may not in fact permit this to bring about an increase in the money supply. Prices in the countries with balance of payments surpluses do not rise, and there is therefore no tendency for these countries to export less and import more. The whole responsibility for adjustment is therefore thrown on the deficit countries. (A country may ignore the inflow of gold, whereas it cannot ignore an outflow: sooner or later, an outflow must be halted or a country's reserves will be exhausted.) In the period after World War I, countries receiving gold were particularly disinclined to permit this inflow to lead to an increase in the

money supply. In the prevailing unsettled conditions, an inflow of gold might represent a balance of payments surplus, but it might also result from an inflow of funds seeking greater security, and liable to be withdrawn when conditions changed. Hence it was not unreasonable to refuse to allow such an inflow of refugee capital ("hot money") to determine the money supply.

Even when the supply of money was adjusted to the movement of gold, it did not follow that prices would be adjusted in the desired way. In particular, the deficit countries found it difficult to reduce prices in order to boost exports. The outflow of gold might be the signal for the adoption of restrictive monetary measures by the authorities. If prices and wages did not fall, however, the result of such measures would be unemployment. With incomes reduced by unemployment and short-time working, people would spend less on goods, including imports. In this way the balance of payments would be improved. But it would be improved only at the cost of unemployment.

The depression of the 'thirties was certainly aggravated, if not caused, by a general decline in international trade. Countries which had deficits, curtailed their imports, not only by reducing their own internal incomes but also by direct controls on international trade. If they cut their trade with all other countries, this meant that they cut imports not only from countries with surpluses but also from countries with deficits. The latter found their difficulties increased and took similar measures. (In addition, other countries faced with rising unemployment imposed restrictions on imports for the purpose of giving more work to their home industries and improving the employment situation. Again, such measures aggravated the difficulties of other countries.) There was a vicious circle of deficits, cuts in trade, deficits elsewhere and further cuts in trade, combined with declining employment everywhere.

Floating Exchange Rates

After 1931, Britain abandoned the attempt to fix the exchange rate of the pound in terms of gold or other

currencies. If Britain had a balance of payments deficit under such conditions, British importers would be clamouring for foreign exchange to settle their debts whilst relatively few foreigners would want sterling to pay their debts here. The result is that the value of the pound on the foreign exchange markets would fall, and the result would be rather similar to our recent devaluation. The process of adjustment, however, would be more continuous and any given movement smaller than a once for all devaluation.

Such floating exchange rates have the merit that they bring about a fairly continuous adjustment of relative prices in different countries, in response to surpluses and deficits in international trade. The result ought to be to eliminate the necessity for relying upon unemployment to cure balance of payments difficulties. There are, however, disadvantages also. The principal one is that uncertainty about the exchange rates is likely to limit international trade. Traders are faced with the risk that the exchange rate will move against them before they are required to settle their accounts. A British importer buys an American article priced at \$100. If the exchange rate is $\$4 = \pounds 1$, each article costs him £25. If, however, the pound falls to \$3.95, in order to get his \$100 to make payment to the American exporter he will have to pay about £25-6s. on the foreign exchange market. This may not sound very much, but on a large order it could mean a lot of money. This risk is eliminated when the value of currencies are fixed in terms of gold, and therefore relatively to each other.

The Need for Adequate Reserves

After the second World War, attempts were made to restore a measure of stability into exchange rates. Each currency was given a fixed value relatively to the American dollar. The dollar itself remained fixed in terms of gold, in so far as the American government undertook to buy or sell gold at a price of \$35 an ounce. Under the rules of the International Monetary Fund, devaluation was permitted only to remedy a serious and persistent balance of payments deficit. No country could expect to have an exact balance

in its foreign accounts at all times. Reserves were therefore necessary to enable settlements to be made by countries with temporary deficits. The amount of gold held by central banks throughout the world did not necessarily provide the right amount of gold to facilitate the desired level of international trade. Therefore the IMF required each country to subscribe a quota, partly in gold and partly in its own currency. It could, therefore, make settlements when required by drawing on its quota with the fund.

The drawing rights on the IMF provided an important supplement to the stock of gold as a means of settlement of international debts. As time went on, other supplementary means of settlement developed. Some countries acquired large holdings of particular currencies, and so long as these currencies were generally accepted, they could be used as a means of settlement. The pound and the dollar, in particular, came to be used in this way as reserve currencies.

Additional sterling and dollar claims come about because Britain and the United States have both tended to have balance of payments deficits in recent years. So long as the deficits were not excessive, they were beneficial in so far as the additional claims resulting added to the means of international settlement. Where the annual increase in the stock of gold might not have been enough to facilitate the growing level of international trade, it was usefully supplemented by this growing volume of claims on sterling or dollars. So long as these two currencies were generally acceptable, all was well. With large and continuing deficits, however, people became suspicious about these currencies and then the trouble started. At the end of 1967 came the devaluation of the pound. Then the speculators began the attack on the dollar. Gold was demanded in exchange for dollar claims, and this had to be provided at the fixed price of \$35 an ounce. The speculators, believing that the demand could not be met indefinitely at this price, continued to clamour for gold in the hope that the dollar would be devalued (that is, the price of gold would rise, so that those who bought an ounce of gold for \$35 might later be able to sell it for \$40 or more).

This pressure on the dollar and pound has been increased by the fanatic nationalism of de Gaulle, who has tried to restore the world to the vagaries of the pure gold standard because he cannot bear to see the currencies of the Anglo-Saxon countries playing a dominating part in world trade. Rather than see the pound and the dollar play the role of reserve currencies, he would prefer the old gold standard, its financial orthodoxy and severe depression and unemployment as the means of eliminating a balance of payments deficit.

The Anglo-Saxon Deficits

This is not to say that Britain and America do not both need to correct their present balance of payments deficits. Britain's trouble is largely consumer overspending on imports. With devaluation, exports should increase, and the recent hard budget is designed to ensure that resources are in fact available to meet the export demand which should soon be rising. America has a large surplus on its ordinary trade account but has an overall deficit because of heavy government military expenditure abroad, particularly in Vietnam. The fear of further escalation of the war has naturally brought fears that the deficit would increase still further, making the position of the dollar still more untenable. The United States, too, must realise that its resources, great as they are, are not unlimited. This can only mean cutting its overseas government expenditure or facing the same kind of austerity measures as Britain.

Two-tier Gold

The Washington meeting of bankers produced a split market for gold. Transactions between the world's central banks would continue at the present price of \$35 an ounce, but other transactions would be on a free market. If the price of gold rises on the free market, and ordinary buyers cannot get gold at the official price, there is no motive for speculation. The pressure on the dollar will be ended, subject to certain conditions. The first, that central banks with large claims on the dollar do not press for settlement in gold. Secondly, those banks acquiring gold must not re-sell

ordinary individuals. It must not be possible for individuals to buy at the official price through the back door of their own central banks.

It is doubtful whether these conditions can be satisfied indefinitely. What then is the alternative? One possibility would be to de-monetise gold completely. The United States could simply withdraw the gold backing for its internal currency, thus releasing large amounts of gold, and refusing to supply gold at the fixed price. This would probably depress the price of gold. Gold is at an artificially *high* value because of its monetary use. If it were used for the manufacture of jewellery, its value would be very much less. What earthly reason is there for the superstitious clinging to gold as a means of international payment? Why follow the path of folly advocated by de Gaulle and his like-minded advisers and increase the price of gold, thus giving a bonus to South Africa where men and capital are engaged in the useless task of digging this yellow metal out of big holes in the ground? Why encourage the wasting of more men and capital in this stupid pursuit?

The alternative is to devise an international credit system. At home, the main means of payment is not money in the form of notes and coin but bank credit. We make these payments by cheque. Most of us normally have to deposit cash before we can draw a cheque, but businessmen and others can acquire the same right through overdrafts. Why not an international bank, payments between countries merely being made by transferring the amount in question from the credit of one country to that of another? The size of drawing permitted would need to be limited. Countries in deficit might be required to pay interest on their borrowings. Indeed, there is much to be said for Keynes's idea of making surplus countries pay interest on their accumulating balances. This, of course, is the opposite of what happens in ordinary internal banking, but countries with a balance of surplus ought to make as big a contribution to restoring international balance as the deficit countries. After all, they stand to lose if the deficit countries really tackle their problems by reducing imports. As imports by deficit countries fall,

exports of surplus countries fall and so will employment in surplus countries. They should help to restore balance by increasing their own level of internal demand, including the demand for imported goods from deficit countries.

Moreover, a system of this kind could be made to provide special rights for the underdeveloped countries. With economic progress, trade increases and a greater volume of gold or whatever other means of settlement are used becomes necessary. If this increase in the means of payment were to take the form of special credits in the international bank for the underdeveloped countries, these countries would then be able to buy the capital goods needed for development. Aid without strings would be given to the underdeveloped countries at the same time as the means of international payment were increased to meet the needs of a growing level of trade.

Help from the Parishes

Claver House seeks to assist the developing countries of English-speaking Africa in what is, perhaps, one of the most effective ways possible. Nine-month courses in leadership training are provided for young African laymen to enable them to play an effective part in the public life of their countries. It is difficult to see how aid given so generously from abroad can be put to the best use unless there are dedicated men on the spot who know how to do so. Claver House seeks to train such men.

The all-in cost of training a young African layman for nine months at Claver House is £590. If parish priests and their people would like to consider bearing this cost in the case of one student — thereby adopting him, so to say — the Director would be more grateful than he could easily say. If you are interested write please to the Rev. Paul Crane, S.J., Claver House, 65, Belgrave Road, London, S.W.1.

Has the State any rights, as distinct from duties, in the field of education? Why is there so much opposition to bringing back the Mass in its original simplicity? How are we to understand the relations between man at his best in the order of nature and man perfected by grace?

Any Questions ?

WILLIAM LAWSON, S.J.

Has the State any rights, as distinct from duties, in the field of education?

Duties, certainly. The original right to educate children belongs to their parents; but they have to be supported by the State, which has to provide an educational system on a national scale, with schools, colleges and universities, examinations and inspections. The decisive will in questions of subjects and standards, types of school, and number of available places is that of parents, expressed constitutionally through their representatives. In practice, the will of the majority has to prevail where it is impossible to depart from uniformity; but minorities have a right to special provision in vital matters such as religion.

Certain secondary rights — or perhaps they are just subsidiary duties — arise out of the basic obligation to help parents: rights to fix hours of work and lengths of term, to inspect educational establishments, and to take measures to have an educated citizenry. I cannot see that the State has a primary right to educate, and therefore on its own account to decide what shall be taught and who, ability apart, shall be eligible for the various stages of education. The State is abusing its power if it withholds financial assistance so as to compel parents to accept policies which go against their conscience. That is done by totalitarian States to impose party-line education, and it is a gross injustice.

The authority of Catholic parents in the education of their children is supported and strengthened by the independent authority of the Church. She has a divinely bestowed right to teach Christian truth. Parents and Church together rightly demand religious, moral and civic education for their children. The State has no right to refuse that demand; its duty is to meet it (and it would find the fulfilling of that demand greatly to its advantage).

Why is there so much opposition to those who would bring back the Mass to its original simplicity ?

The original simplicity of the Mass is that of the Last Supper. What we must do is what Christ did, and we must do it in commemoration of Him. We must offer Sacrifice and make a Sacrament, with everyone's participation in both. We must then try to manifest the full meaning of the Sacrifice and the Sacrament. That is the purpose of liturgical renewal.

Opinions are obviously divided about the means to that end. Even the most extreme opinion deserves patient consideration; and if the extremists from either end would be tolerant with one another they might proceed together to a position somewhere in the middle. They need to consider not only Christian archaeology and Catholic conservatism but the demands of huge congregations. What is old and original is not necessarily right for our time, and neither is what is part of a modern habit lacking in self-criticism.

How can the meaning of Mass and Eucharist be shown ritually to crowds on Sundays? What degree of formal solemnity is helpful, in vestments and ceremonies? Does a genuine liturgy have to be informal and workaday? What is the ideal size of a church (supposing we are to have churches at all) for a teeming parish? Are we being sensibly modern, or merely cultivating archaism, if we yearn for the intimacy of the Last Supper or the eucharistic celebrations in St. Paul's time?

As you see, a great many "ologies" have to be studied before an opinion becomes informed and helpfully com-

unicable — theology, sociology, archaeology . . . For that, and for legitimate experimentation under the guidance of the bishops, we need time — and charity.

How are we to understand the relations between man at his best in the order of nature and man perfected by grace ?

If you are seeking to compare, in the concrete, the perfection of human nature by itself with the perfection of that nature when transformed by grace, then you can call off the search — no human being can arrive at a purely natural perfection. Human nature since original sin tends to become corrupt; and the one preservative which will keep nature healthy is the grace of God.

Everybody needs salvation. Salvation is by Christ alone, and everybody, therefore, needs Him and the life that He gives. It is possible for human beings — but not, surely, for very long — to persuade themselves that they are in complete command of themselves and their destiny. "I am the master of my fate. I am the captain of my soul." The Nazis proclaimed, at the height of their power, that the German race had no need of salvation. They and their like eventually demonstrate the truth of man's dependence on God for the preservation of his goodness as man, in his very nature, material and spiritual.

The relationship between natural and supernatural is hard to describe in terms of priority, superiority and importance. Both natural and supernatural are essential for human perfection; but nature is the basic element in the ultimate completeness, because man's nature can exist without transformation by the supernatural, whereas the supernatural in man must have his nature to live in. That is the meaning of the phrase "Grace builds on nature". In the ordinary way, apart from a special infusion of knowledge, a sanctified genius had to be a genius by nature before grace came in to give him his supernatural quality. Natural gifts are an important element in Christian stature.

Can the religious life be called a *more* perfect way of life, since all are called to perfection, i.e. holiness, by the baptismal vows ?

In one sense, there are no degrees in perfection. Any being is either complete or incomplete, perfect or imperfect. The questioner has in mind a comparison between different perfections. In heaven, where "star differs from star in glory", though all are perfect it is evident that every human perfection is unique, and no two human perfections are graded, just as containers can be graded for capacity though all are full.

Can states of life be graded in the same way, for the differing perfections they make possible ? Certainly they can, if they are considered from the point of view of a person choosing one or another of them. He or she can ask not only if this or that state will make it possible to achieve personal completeness but also which of several states will extend the capacity that is to be fulfilled — in which state of life will faith, hope and charity be strongest ? That grading of states is, however, subjective. The desirable state for anyone is that which is in conformity with the will of God, and it might be entered by force of circumstances with no choice.

If priority were to be assigned objectively to any state, the grading would have to be by measurement of charity. Love of God and of people is as intense as the individual makes it, in any state of life; but the extent of love — the availability of the person for service of Christ through his brethren — is greatest in religious life, which is freed by the religious vows from the limitations which are inseparable from equally noble Christian states.

Why is it necessary to have a visible Church instead of worshippers "in spirit" ?

Because Christ founded a visible Church, and we are his followers. We should not be faithful to Him, were we to abandon his foundation for a new one of our own designing.

The Apostles were visible enough, and so were the Christian communities they began and governed.

Perhaps your question was prompted by disapproval of the judgment, implicit in much Catholic behaviour, that the essential of Christianity is to belong to an organized Christian body, keep its rules and enjoy its privileges. Personal dedication to Christ, a lifetime spent as his disciple, learning from him and putting into practice what he preaches, is not even thought of by so many. They may be able to recite the Beatitudes and the works of mercy; but they are not captivated by the ideals of meekness, mercy, poverty of spirit and service of the needy. Like one of the early Christian groups, they are "neither hot nor cold". They (and the Church, and the world) would be much healthier if they worshipped in spirit and in truth.

It would be unjust to blame the visible Church for all the abomination she harbours. Her very visibility is an appeal for genuine allegiance to Christ — and part of that visibility, even her growth over the centuries, must be a legal system, offices and tribunals as well as rights and ceremonies. To condemn a large part of Catholic observance as legalistic may be fair; but the remedy is not to scrap the laws. Christ himself gave us laws, by which we are still bound. The job is to make sure that the letter is not allowed to stifle the spirit. Not one jot or tittle of the law, as Christ said, is to be abrogated; but the whole must be inspired. The dry bones must come alive.

Books Review

A MATTER OF INVOLVEMENT

Those Dutch Catholics, a Symposium; Geoffrey Chapman, 21s; pp. 164. **Dialogue** by Cardinal Heenan and Rosemary Haughton; Geoffrey Chapman, 21s; pp. 182.

A WRITER in *The Times* has made the point that, two years after the close of Vatican II, there is little sign in Europe of its recommendations being put into active practice. In this I see nothing strange. Rome was not built in a day and it is unlikely to change in one. If it set out to do so it would be deservedly suspect. The reforms called for by the Council are far-reaching. They must be made in depth. The task calls for gradualness — thoughtful evolution as well as evolution in thought — if the future is to be taken hold of without doing violence to the past. Sensitivity and communication are essential to the success of this process. Needs must be discerned — felt in the bones, really — then communicated and discussed, if true remedies are to be applied and the *aggiornamento* brought to life.

It is greatly to the credit of the Dutch Church that, within it these past few years, close communication has been established between bishops, priests and people. There can be no doubt, I think, of this. Within the Dutch Church dialogue exists on a grand scale. What I am not so sure of is whether the sensitivity is there as well; whether the dialogue is relevant because geared to the real needs of the *aggiornamento* in Holland today.

I am inclined to doubt this in the case of the Dutch. The impression I have found from a reading of *Those Dutch Catholics* is that, though dialogue exists within the Dutch Church, one cannot be sure of the extent to which it is geared to the basic need of Dutch—or any—society. This, surely, is for involvement through love enriched by grace, working as it always must, from a base of courtesy and good manners.

The Dutch are a fine people with admirable qualities, but they are at times strongly insensitive to the claim made on us all by normal human relationships. Contributors to this Symposium speak of the long period, which only ended recently, during which Dutch Catholics were hemmed in, a tight knit community on the defensive against their Protestant brethren. A point worth noting is that they were not only hemmed in but regimented by their bishops and clergy as English Catholics never were, even though these enjoyed over the same period a like minority status. How far, one asks therefore, is the present explosion in Catholic Holland a reaction against regimentation within the Dutch Church rather than a break-out from its closed-in condition — full of defensive attitudes — during the past hundred years. And to what extent will the new forms which emerge from the present tumult be no more than subconscious compensation for the inability of Dutch Catholics to establish normal relationships — as distinct from an ecumenical *rapport* — with their non-Catholic countrymen?

The question is brutal, but, I think, worth asking. Without charity, you have no more than sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. What the *aggiornamento* requires is not so much the updating of the Church's structure as the outgoing in love of Catholic hearts and minds to the men and women of this day and age. Updating of structures, therefore, is only relevant to the extent that it is set to the service of outgoing minds. This means that real needs must be recognised and, for this, sensitivity is essential. What I wonder is whether the Dutch have it to the degree required to make the *aggiornamento* in their own Church effective. If they have not, then, at the end of the present furore, there will certainly be new forms within the Dutch Church, but no true involvement of Dutch Catholics in contemporary society because no real appreciation of its needs. Contributors to this Symposium give no evidence that they are in any way aware of them.

English Catholics, like the Dutch, were hemmed in and on the defensive for centuries. They suffered from the same minority complex, but they were not regimented by their clergy — not enmeshed to stifling point within a plethora of

Catholic organizations to anything like the same extent as their Dutch brethren. They moved much more easily in Protestant circles than these did. Too many of them, in fact, spent too much of their time trying to show their Protestant neighbours that they were just as good Englishmen as they were. Most were men of two worlds; pious Catholics in private, but taking their cue in public from their Protestant surround. Unlike the Dutch, the minority they constituted was too small to form an organised defensive bloc : moreover, by temperament the English were disinclined to do so. Loyal to their priests and friendly with them, they were not open, by nature, to regimentation. Neither clergy nor laity in England had any real desire for it. For this reason, I believe, the Vatican Council brought no explosion within the English Church: there was nothing really to explode against. Most Catholics in this country have always been content to wait for the clergy to give a lead. Their natural reaction after the Council was for them to continue to wait for the clergy to do so. The rows that have occurred within the English Church concern the merest handful. The main body of the faithful has not been involved.

These words are not written in self-satisfaction. If the English have a capacity for human relationships which the Dutch lack, the Catholics amongst them are without the awareness of need necessary to put it to advantage and most lack the energy to try and awaken it within themselves. The great mass of English Catholics neither understand what involvement means nor see the need for it. For most of them the Council has signified little more than Mass in the vernacular facing the people, friendly relations with Anglicans, an occasional priest in a black roll-top sweater and the parish council thrown in for good measure. The *aggiornamento* is still a mystery, in explanation of which they still wait for a lead from the priest.

I doubt whether the recently published dialogue between Cardinal Heenan and Mrs. Haughton will shed light on this somewhat depressing scene. What it reveals, rather painfully, is that their minds are apart. What Mrs. Haughton seems to me to want more than anything else is better communica-

tions within the English Catholic Church: she is pleading for the laity to be let in on the doings of ecclesiastical superiors. I think she is right to want it and the Cardinal a little quick to parry her thrusts in aid of this request. It is no real answer to complaints against authority to say that the real crisis is one of obedience. The real answer, I would say, lies somewhere in the middle, with the insensitivity of authority — its failure to take count of the subject's understanding, and so of his humanity — meriting most of the blame. It is most certainly true that methods of a bygone age cannot usefully be applied to the present and that authority has nothing to lose and much to gain by removing from its commands the stamp of arbitrariness and authoritarianism that has marked them too often in the past.

Authority will lose nothing and gain much if it seeks advice. The real difficulty lies in how to do this, how authority is to build a consensus round itself and associate those subject to it closely with its commands. The handful that has been having rows in the English Catholic Church since the Council has been peculiarly insensitive to this need. Quite apart from its ignorance of the needs felt by huge sections of England's post-Christian society, its manner of presenting its case has left a great deal to be desired, not only from the angle of charity but also from that of clarity. One gets the impression of a narky minority that is totally unrepresentative. One cannot expect the English Bishops to take people of this sort into their councils.

Be this as it may, I am not at all sure that the best way for ecclesiastical authority in England to associate those subject to it more closely with its commands is through any great alteration of existing diocesan structures. I doubt whether the Dutch mini-Council will prove a good thing. I incline to the view that the best way lies through increased delegation of function on the part of the Bishops and, at the same time, encouragement to the laity to involve themselves intelligently in the world in which they live. Once laymen start doing this — taking charge of the temporal, by which I mean seeking to influence the structure of society, as is their duty—there will be whole areas of action and involve-

ment of which they are masters and about which any bishop or priest in his senses would be only too glad to have their advice. On the other hand, there will be moral angles to this involvement about which any layman in his senses would find the need to consult bishop or priest. Clearly, there is a basis here for very fruitful co-operation in the future between all ranks in the Church. The resolution of the present crisis over authority will come when the laity involve themselves up to the hilt in the temporal. The best thing the Bishops can do at the moment is to encourage them to do so. A start might be made by taking the advice of the few already at work in this way; not the chatterers, but the real people really involved in their everyday world. The *aggiornamento* can only be through them.

Paul Crane, S.J.

TEACHING THE YOUNG

Young Christians Today edited in the English Edition by Peter McConville; Geoffrey Chapman, in volumes of about 200 pp. each and 8/6 per per volume. [paper].

Every Christian is, or should be, interested in putting across his faith to others, and in deepening his own grasp upon it. Those particularly concerned in this task are, of course, teachers in general, catechists and those with young families. Especially considering the last category, this does include most of us. But it is a sad fact that for the great majority of Catholics their knowledge of their faith stops short at what they had learnt at school or parish catechism class, together with the way of life learnt from their parents while still children. In every other field, their work, current affairs, hobbies, and human nature, people continue to learn, and even may make great efforts to inform themselves, but not, alas, in the matter of their religion. There might be some excuse if there were a dearth of matter or a shortage

of books, but this is not so, as the present five volumes of *Young Christians Today* illustrates.

In fact these five volumes are, basically, a catechism, designed to cover five years of instruction for children. For most readers, except the very young, catechism will recall memories of the "penny catechism", and the steady plod of trying to learn it by heart. But this is a catechism of the new style, and therefore it is as well to say something of the theory behind it, as opposed to the former style.

In the teaching of catechism prior to the Second World War, the emphasis was placed upon knowledge as such. The direction of that knowledge was largely determined by past history, especially the history of the Reformation, when dogmas and ideas were bandied about, and snippets of Scripture or the Fathers were used as a sort of small arms in the dogmatic war. It was in this atmosphere that the great Catechism of St. Peter Canisius was born, and it was the model upon which subsequent catechisms were based. The prime object was to give hard facts and ammunition for the theological war, and it was presumed that the grace of God would act upon the intellect so informed, leading the individual to live those truths in his private life.

Such catechetical formation was not a self-existent system independent of the rest of life, because the greater part of Europe at that time was Christian, and practicing Christian to some extent. Every aspect of the social order reflected the need to put into practice the Christian knowledge a man possessed. Kings were Christian Kings, the state acted on a derived authority from God, justice was administered under a Christian oath. To be a pagan, a moor or an atheist at that time meant to be an outcast. In such a context, it is almost self-evident that the essential in the training of a Christian was a matter of intellectual formation.

But whether one is going to call that past age a golden age or not, everyone must now admit that things have changed. Not only have social conditions changed and de-christianisation come upon us, but also our knowledge of the human mind and character has been considerably widened in the past fifty years or so. The mere possession of know-

ledge, even the knowledge of Christ, is now not enough to create a saint. Grace must, of course, play a large part in this end-product of religious teaching, but we have a duty to apply the human knowledge and techniques available to us. The response of the teaching profession to this new situation has been a re-examination and reframing of the methods of teaching religion used in the past.

Among the new ideas that has been introduced is the cyclic approach to the teaching of religion. The basis of this approach is that as the child develops it is capable, at all stages, of grasping some of the truths of the faith, but at each stage the understanding is at a different level. Therefore, in order that the instruction of the child shall be in conformity with the natural growth of its ability, there is a need to give it first a general and simple knowledge which is developed more highly in the next stage of learning, and progressively becomes fuller and deeper as the child develops. Thus there is a cycle in the learning of the child. This is in contrast to the old style, which was linear. Each subject was treated one after another in an ordered sequence, and this according to logic, rather than growth. The child was therefore confronted with religious knowledge that was in itself sound, but was totally beyond its comprehension merely from the point of experience and vocabulary. Those who favour the old system think that the child will remember, even if subconsciously, the lessons of the past in the light of future experience, while those who favour the new view think that having once been put off the child will have no future interest as a man.

Of course, the protagonists in the catechetical argument over linear or cyclic development of doctrine can quote particular cases and examples in favour of one side or another. The person who had "left" the faith, and then one day was struck by the meaning of something learnt in the past, on account of some personal experience, and so returned to the fold. On the other hand there is the person who simply discards all connection with the faith after completing a good Catholic schooling. The very fact that this is so, makes one wonder if there is not a great deal of value in both approaches,

and that the better answer would be an amalgam of the two. At present, in educational circles, the cyclicists have gained the ascendancy over the linear old time catechists. But just as the cyclic system is based upon a psychological study of The Child, so from the point of view of child psychology there seems to be good reason for giving the child a certain amount of progressive by heart work, which does precisely extend its capacity for understanding. Witness the pleasure that children get from by heart work in poetry that is often beyond the comprehension of many grown-ups. For most people the poetry of love is not fully understood until they have been truly in love, but that does not make the poetry of love less attractive to them before that time.

It may well be, then, that there is still room for some of the old teaching of religion by heart to the young. But it is also certain, as a result of modern research and common sense, that this is not sufficient, any more than the cyclic system is sufficient. The learning must go hand in hand with practice. This means that there is a slight change in the emphasis on the private study side. More accent is placed upon the child doing something practical in connection with the work done in the lesson, and this is an extension of the homework principle.

In the works under review, the cyclic approach to the teaching and learning of religion is taken. The reaction on the part of the child is suggested in the exercises given at the end of each section. This is admirable, but it seems to me that no account is taken of the value of regular by heart, and this is a pity. Similarly it is a pity that all complicated words are avoided — the mere non-mention of Transubstantiation does not remove the difficulty that is contained in the concept for which it was coined. It would be a pity if the generation of tomorrow were brought up without knowledge of the precision that was so laboriously worked out in the past. Sometimes, indeed, the words that clothe the faith convey a meaning and a mystery so deep that no human words are adequate to express it fully, *a fortiori* these words will not then be fully meaningful to a child, nor an old man for that matter, and still they must be

used. What this paragraph adds up to is the suggestion that anyone who wishes to use these books for the purpose of teaching will need to supplement them from other sources.

In any event, *Young Christians Today* will probably need supplementing, because it seems to me to fall into one of the traps of the cyclic system. When things are dealt with on the progressive deepening and widening of knowledge, then as each cycle comes around there must be some repetition. Not a bad thing in itself for repetition is the mother of knowledge. But all the same there is a need for a sense of progress if the repetition is not to become boring, and the deepening and widening of knowledge in these books does not seem to me to be sufficiently apparent. In the use of these books as textbooks the defect might be remedied in attending to my next criticism.

In the catechesis or teaching of doctrine in the past we Catholics placed far too little emphasis on the use of Holy Scripture, and we were wrong not to have done so. But in the new catechesis, an example of which we are examining, scripture is replaced in the fundamental position it ought always to have had. Particularly for children this is a good thing, since scripture is so immediate and its language so basically simple. But I do not think that the dogmatic side, in the sense of the teaching of the Fathers and of the scholars since then should be treated so lightly as they are in these volumes, for tradition is a valuable source of our knowledge of Christ and his teaching. If matter from the Fathers and the Schools were introduced when using the later volumes, then I think that this would emphasise the progress made as the cycles advance, and the knowledge of the students would be confirmed.

In the arrangement of the books, I find one weakness. Volume 3 deals with "The Following of Christ", and is concerned with the choice of life, and the practical application of the doctrine of Christ in the adult world. For this reason it would seem to me to be rather a finale to the course than its middle.

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